

DAREZ MOVE4NATURE



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TOOLKIT

HOW TO ORGANISE educational outdoor and hiking camps for youngsters



Index

Get to know Dare2Move4Nature project	3
Objectives of the project	
Prepare for the camp	4
4 important steps to follow	
Staying safe	9
Guidelines to keep participants safe, healthy and accident-free	
How to organise a camp	14
Tips to provide youngsters with once in a life time educational forest adventure	
Games and activities for the camps	22
Ideas to keep youngsters active	



Get to know Dare2Move4Nature project

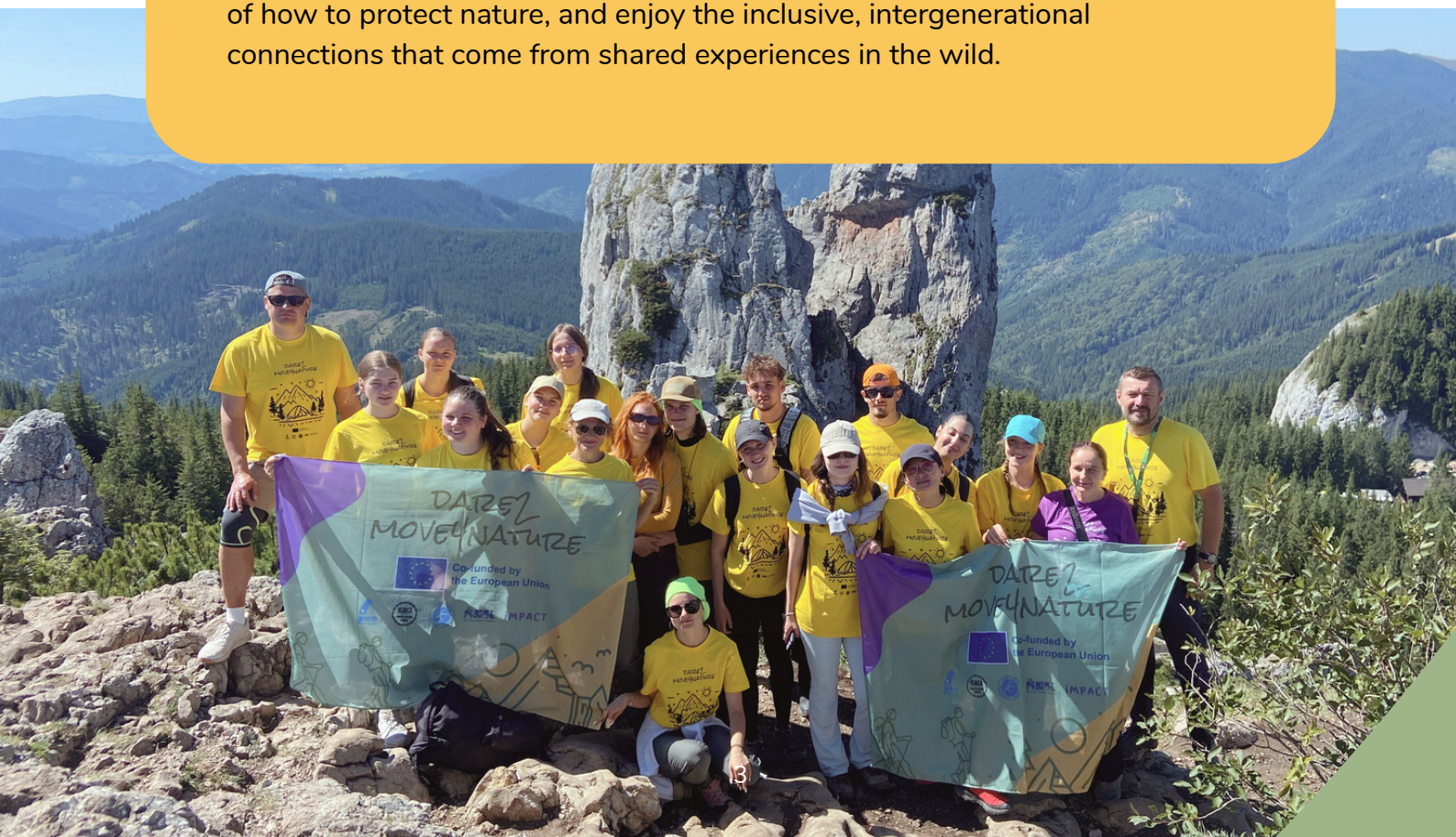
To help keep the countryside clean, promote green education, and inspire people to take their rubbish with them, we launched the “Dare2Move4Nature” initiative.

Dare2Move4Nature includes activities like hiking, camping, learning about climate action, and cleaning up trails and campsites. Participants will practice essential skills such as setting up tents, carrying cleanup bags, picking up trash along trails, and leaving campsites clean. They'll also gain practical survival skills for outdoor adventures.

Objectives of the project

This initiative was created to inspire young people to respect and protect the environment while being active in nature. Through a 4-day camping experience, young participants will learn the essential environmental, outdoor and sustainability skills.

By blending those camping and outdoor adventures with meaningful activities, young participants will gain valuable survival skills, develop an understanding of how to protect nature, and enjoy the inclusive, intergenerational connections that come from shared experiences in the wild.



Prepare for the camp

To prepare for a camp, several important steps need to be taken to safeguard the participants and ensure a positive experience. Below, we have explained clear steps that can be taken.



Step 1:

Plan the Route and Camp

The first step involves carefully planning the route and overall structure of the camp. This includes selecting and marking safe, well-defined trails suitable for the age and ability level of the participants, and evaluating the total distance and duration of the camp.

An essential part of this planning is identifying a suitable campsite, one that is safe, flat, and accessible, with access to clean water, protection from harsh weather, and enough space to accommodate all participants comfortably. The leader should also consider terrain difficulty, rest points, and emergency exit options for the hike to the camp.

Based on the number of participants, organizers must determine the appropriate adult supervision ratio, ensuring at least one trained guide or teacher is assigned per 10 children to maintain safety and provide adequate support throughout the journey.

Important: The trained guide to participant ratio may vary between countries due to varying levels of safeguarding policies.

Important tip: We highly suggest the organising team visit the camp place/hiking routes before the camp. It will allow you to plan and modify the preparation needs of the camp as written descriptions might be misleading.

Step 2:

Survey for the Parents/Guardians of Participants

When selecting or recruiting participants to attend the camp, create a registration survey (online or paper format) for the parents/guardians to complete if participants are U18 or for the participants to complete if they are over 18. Key information to ask on the survey is:

- Emergency Contacts
- Dietary Needs and Allergies
- Injuries or important medical conditions that might inhibit participation (including fear of heights)
- Prior experience of camping and hiking.

Step 3:

Pilot Activities and Pre-activities

Before conducting the hike, organise pilot activities for both the activity leaders and the participants to ensure they are well-prepared and familiar with the procedures, safety protocols, and expected outcomes.

They also allow leaders to test their readiness and identify any issues in advance. Additionally, these pre-activities build team cohesion and boost confidence, which leads to a smoother, safer, and more enjoyable hiking experience for all.

Example of activities for leaders:

Team Building	If you have new leaders working together, run some team-building activities to help them build good group cohesion.
Emergency Drill Practice	Simulate emergencies (e.g. injury, lost hiker, sudden weather change) to practice first aid, group communication, and decision-making.
Equipment Check and Use	Practice and demonstrate how to use equipment such as compasses, maps, GPS devices, and first aid kits to ensure leaders are comfortable with all gear.
Management Scenarios	Role-play group challenges, like dealing with a tired or uncooperative participant to help develop problem-solving skills and have solutions ready to use when hiking.
Time Trail of Hike	To gain a better insight into the hike length and terrain, hike leaders should do a trail run of the hike, so they become more familiar before hiking with the participants.



Examples of activities for participants:

Orientation Session (online or in-person)	Run an online or in-person information session, where participants can ask any questions they like about the hike.
Basic First Aid Workshop	Run a basic first aid workshop covering what participants should do if they get injured and how to best manage any injuries. Whilst activity leaders will be there to deliver first aid during the camp, participants must have a basic understanding.
Fitness Check or Trail Walk	Deliver a pre-hike fitness activity so you can gain a better understanding of the participants' fitness level. This could be done by going on a shorter walk or playing some sports activities.
Gear Check and Packing Lesson	Get participants to do a practice pack and then review if they have the items needed and the weight distribution is correct. A trainer can take them through the appropriate way to pack.
Team Building Games	This helps foster trust, communication, and cooperation among participants, creating a strong group dynamic before the camp begins. Activities could be problem-solving activities, such as creating a shelter as a team.



Step 4:

Information to Share with Participants

Before the camp, it is essential to ensure that all participants are well-informed and properly prepared so they feel confident and excited to attend. This can be done during the orientation session online or in person, as well as by providing an information pack.

The information pack should include a detailed equipment checklist, including hiking shoes, a water bottle, weather-appropriate clothing, a flashlight, and a personal first aid kit. It is also important to share if any specialised equipment is needed or if it will be provided.

Top tip: provide information on where equipment can be purchased and average prices.

Linking to equipment, information on how to pack efficiently, emphasising the importance of balanced weight and easy access to essentials such as a water bottle, a rain jacket and a first aid kit, should be provided to prevent any injuries from poorly balanced bags.

Additionally, the information provided should include clear information about the hike and camp itself, including:

Total distance



Estimated duration



Terrain of the hike



Type of accommodation (campsite or cabins, share or single rooms)



Difficulty level of the hike



What type of food
will be provided?



Other activities and needed equipment (such as
kayaking, forest mushroom picking, sporty
activities at the campside, etc.)



Lastly, **the meeting point, date, and time, along with directions, parking details if applicable, and contact information** in case anyone is delayed or has questions, must be provided clearly to participants to ensure a smooth start to the hike. Upon arrival, an initial evaluation form should be provided to the participants so they can review their health and knowledge of the hike.



Staying safe

Safety comes first, especially when you are guiding a group of youngsters. First, always know where you are going and what the weather looks like because conditions can change fast up here. Stick with the group and never wander off the trail. Bring everything you need: water, snacks, a jacket, sun protection, and anything else we talked about. Being prepared is part of staying safe. The goal is to enjoy the adventure and get back safely, so stay alert, help each other, and don't forget to look around and enjoy the view!

Emergency number

112 is the universal emergency number you can call for all emergencies, including mountain accidents. When you call 112, your call will be routed to the appropriate emergency service, such as mountain rescue, ambulance, or police, depending on your location and situation.



Inform the needed authorities and forest rangers that the group will be camping

It's important to inform the relevant authorities, such as cottages and huts managers, park or forest rangers or mountain rescue teams before the group sets up camp. This helps them know who is in the area, ensures you have permission if required, and allows them

to provide any important information about local rules, fire restrictions, or wildlife activity. Notifying them also improves safety, as they will be aware of your presence and can respond more quickly in case of an emergency.



Nature etiquette

Nature etiquette revolves around respecting nature, other visitors, and local rules to protect the environment and ensure everyone enjoys their time outdoors. Here are the key points:



Stay on marked trails to avoid damaging plants and disturbing wildlife.



Do not pick plants, flowers, or mushrooms unless it's explicitly allowed.



Take all your litter with you—leave no trace behind.



Do not start fires except in designated areas, and always follow fire safety rules.



Keep dogs on a leash where required to protect wildlife and other people.



Respect local regulations such as camping restrictions, hunting seasons, and protected areas.



Be considerate to other forest users, like hikers, cyclists, and horseback riders.

Pre-check if equipment is sufficient and working

Before camping with a group of youngsters, it's essential to pre-check that all equipment is sufficient and in good working order. This helps prevent problems during the trip, ensures everyone has what they need for safety and comfort, and reduces stress for both the leaders and participants.

Checking things like tents, sleeping bags, cooking gear, first aid kits, and personal items like boots and backpacks ahead of time means you can fix or replace anything necessary before you head out. It also gives you a chance to remind the youngsters how to use their equipment properly.

Hydration and nutrition

When hiking or camping in the mountains, staying properly hydrated and well-nourished is really important because your body is working harder, and conditions can be more challenging. Mountains often have lower humidity and higher altitudes, which can make you lose fluids faster, so drinking water regularly, even before you feel thirsty, is key to preventing dehydration. It's a good idea to carry enough water and, if possible, have a way to refill or purify it on the trail. Nutrition-wise, you want to eat foods that give you steady energy throughout the day.

Focus on a mix of carbohydrates for quick energy, protein for muscle repair, and some healthy fats. Snacks like nuts, dried fruit, energy bars, and sandwiches work well because they're easy to carry and eat on the go. Also, try to eat small amounts regularly rather than large meals to keep your energy levels stable. Remember that good hydration and nutrition will help you feel stronger, think clearly, and enjoy your mountain adventure safely.

Respect wildlife

Respecting wildlife is a key part of enjoying nature responsibly. When you're out in the mountains or forests, remember to observe animals from a distance without approaching or feeding them. Getting too close can stress the animals or disrupt their natural behaviour. Feeding wildlife can make them dependent on humans and may harm their health.

Also, avoid making loud noises or sudden movements that might scare animals. By giving wildlife space and behaving calmly, you help protect them and keep the natural environment balanced for everyone to enjoy.



First aid course

Taking a first aid course and having proper education is incredibly important, especially when spending time outdoors or leading groups in the mountains. A first aid course teaches you how to recognise and respond to common injuries and emergencies like cuts, sprains, dehydration, hypothermia, and allergic reactions. It also covers how to perform CPR and handle situations until professional help arrives.

Having this knowledge increases everyone's safety and confidence during the trip, allowing you to act quickly and effectively if someone gets hurt. It's a valuable skill for anyone who spends time in nature or works with groups, and it's always a good idea to refresh your training regularly.



Weather check

Weather safety in the mountains is crucial because conditions can change rapidly and dramatically. Always check the weather forecast before your trip and keep an eye on the sky during your hike or camp. Be prepared for sudden changes like rain, strong winds, or temperature drops by bringing appropriate clothing such as waterproof jackets, warm layers, and sturdy boots.

If severe weather approaches, know when to seek shelter or turn back to avoid dangerous situations like thunderstorms, heavy fog, or avalanches. Staying informed, dressing appropriately, and having a clear plan for bad weather will help keep you and your group safe and comfortable.

Exit routes

Knowing exit options is vital for safety. Before setting out, always familiarise yourself with multiple exit routes or escape paths on your map and note any nearby shelters or roads. If any of the youngsters get too tired, injured, or the weather worsens, try to move to the safest and easiest route downhill or toward a known landmark.

If you cannot walk at all, stay put to avoid making your situation worse, find a safe spot out of the elements, and signal for help using a whistle, phone, or visible markers. Always carry a fully charged phone if possible and inform someone about your plans before you start, so rescuers know where to look if needed.



How to organise a camp

When it comes to implementation, there are several important considerations to ensure the camp runs smoothly and safely. To help you stay organised and avoid overlooking any crucial steps, we've put together a detailed step-by-step plan:

Organise a pre-camp meeting

Organise a pre-camp meeting, either online or onsite, at least one month before the camp to ensure participants are well informed and adequately prepared. The meeting should cover essential topics such as the camp schedule, required equipment (from shoes to backpacks), safety measures, potential challenges, expected physical

activity levels, and any relevant health concerns.

Assess participants' prior experience and fitness levels to tailor the information accordingly, and present all details in a clear, concise, and easy-to-understand manner to ensure everyone is ready and confident before the camp begins.

Determine the Meeting and Starting Point

Identify a convenient and accessible meeting location where all participants can gather before departure. This should ideally be a well-known public place, such as a school, community hall, or local park with good transport links. Be sure to communicate the exact time and address clearly to parents and guardians in

advance, using both written and digital formats (e.g., emails, text messages, or flyers). Include any specific instructions, such as what to bring, dress code, or emergency contact numbers, to avoid confusion on the day.

Conduct a Bag Check Before Departure

Before setting off on the hike to the camp location, it's essential to carry out a brief inspection of each participant's belongings. This helps to ensure they are not carrying any prohibited or unsafe items such as alcohol, tobacco, sharp objects, or anything that could pose a risk to themselves or others. This can be done discreetly

and respectfully by staff or volunteers, ideally with a clear checklist and in the presence of another adult to maintain transparency. Make sure to inform parents beforehand that this is part of your safety protocol, and encourage young participants to pack responsibly and ask questions if unsure.

Keep the group together, manage the proper, slow pace of the walk

It's important to keep the group together during walks or hikes to ensure everyone's safety and maintain a sense of unity. Set a steady, manageable pace that accommodates the slowest walkers, rather than rushing ahead. Assign leaders at the front and back of the group to guide and monitor progress, helping prevent

anyone from falling behind or getting separated. Regular breaks should be scheduled for water, rest, and regrouping, especially in challenging terrain or hot weather. Creating an inclusive walking pace helps build morale, reduces fatigue, and ensures that all participants can enjoy the journey together.



Setting up the camp: tents and accommodation

Setting up tents or arranging accommodation should be done as soon as the group arrives at the campsite to ensure everyone is settled before nightfall. Choose a flat, dry area away from hazards such as water bodies, steep slopes, or loose rocks. Make sure tents are spaced out with enough room for personal space and ventilation, while keeping the group close enough for easy supervision and safety.

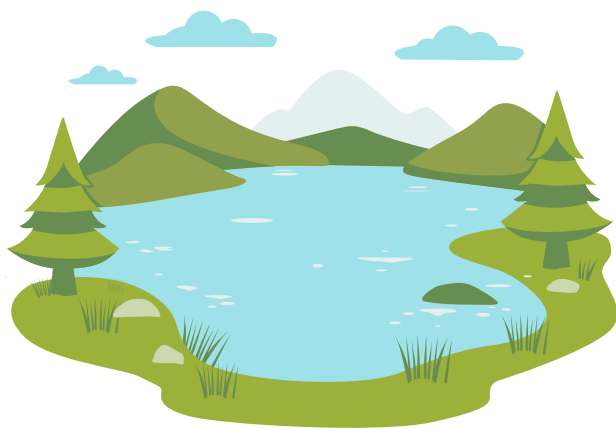
Demonstrate how to pitch tents properly, involving the teens in the process to teach them basic outdoor skills. If using cabins or other facilities, assign rooms in advance and clearly explain boundaries, lights-out times, and shared responsibilities for tidiness. Always check the site for safety and accessibility before finalising where each person will sleep.

Hygiene and Safe Space

Hygiene and creating a safe space are essential when running an outdoor camp for teenagers. These not only support physical well-being but also help build trust and emotional safety.

Toilets:

- Portable toilets or nearby public facilities should be available, cleaned daily, and stocked with toilet paper and hand sanitiser.
- If in a more remote area, ensure campers are instructed on how to use makeshift latrines properly and hygienically (e.g., digging a small pit and covering it).



Personal Hygiene

- Encourage each teen to bring a toiletry kit (soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant, sanitary products, etc.), wet wipes or biodegradable wipes for quick clean-ups, and small towel or face cloth.

Maintaining hygiene in an outdoor setting can be challenging, but with thoughtful planning, it's entirely manageable and crucial for preventing illness or discomfort.



Hand Washing:

- Set up hand washing stations near meal prep/eating areas and toilets, with water containers, soap, and disposable towels or cloths.
- Emphasise the importance of hand washing before meals, after using the toilet, and after physical activities.



Creating a Safe and Inclusive Space

The first step involves carefully planning the route and overall structure of the camp. This includes selecting and marking safe, well-defined trails suitable for the age and ability level of the participants, and evaluating the total distance and duration of the camp.

An essential part of this planning is identifying a suitable campsite, one that is safe, flat, and accessible, with access to clean water, protection from harsh weather, and enough space to accommodate all participants comfortably. The leader should also consider terrain difficulty, rest points, and emergency exit options for the hike to the camp.

Based on the number of participants, organizers must determine the appropriate adult supervision ratio, ensuring at least one trained guide or teacher is assigned per 10 children to maintain safety and provide adequate support throughout the journey.

Important: The trained guide to participant ratio may vary between countries due to varying levels of safeguarding policies.

Important tip: We highly suggest the organising team visit the camp place/hiking routes before the camp. It will allow you to plan and modify the preparation needs of the camp as written descriptions might be misleading.

Storage of the food

Proper preparation and storage of food are crucial for maintaining hygiene and keeping everyone healthy during the camp. Designate a clean, shaded area as the cooking and dining zone, ideally with access to fresh water for washing hands, utensils, and ingredients. Meals should be planned in advance with a focus on nutrition, simplicity, and any dietary needs or allergies. Only trained adults or responsible volunteers should handle raw food and cooking equipment to prevent accidents and foodborne illnesses.

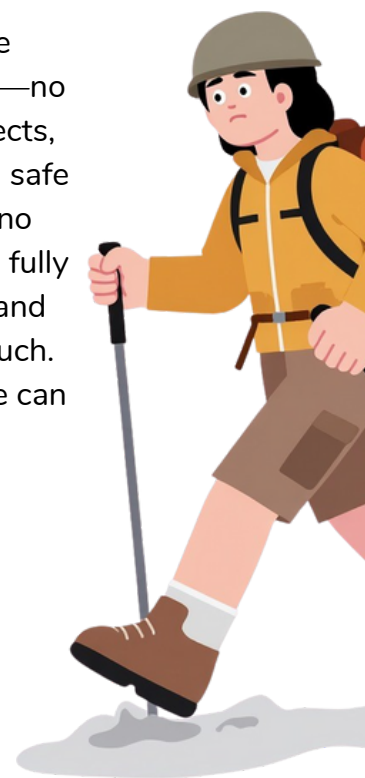
Store perishable items in coolers or insulated containers, and keep all food covered to protect it from insects and animals. Non-perishable supplies should be kept in airtight, clearly labelled containers and elevated off the ground. Encourage campers to use their own reusable utensils and water bottles, and ensure all waste is promptly cleared and disposed of properly.



Setting up the campfire

Setting up a campfire should always be done with safety and supervision in mind. Choose a designated fire-safe area that is sheltered from wind, away from tents, trees, and any flammable materials. Use a fire ring or dig a shallow pit surrounded by stones to contain the flames. Only adults or trained leaders should be responsible for lighting and maintaining the fire, using dry wood and kindling gathered from approved areas. Always keep a bucket of water, sand, or a fire extinguisher nearby in case of emergencies.

Teach campers about safe behaviour around the fire—no running, no throwing objects, and always maintaining a safe distance. Once the fire is no longer needed, it must be fully extinguished with water and stirred until cold to the touch. A well-managed campfire can be a wonderful space for warmth, storytelling, and bonding—so long as it's handled with care and respect.



Use of digitalisation and mobile devices properly

To encourage presence, connection, and engagement with nature, the use of mobile phones and digital devices should be limited and structured. A practical approach is to allow campers a designated 10-minute window in the morning and another 10 minutes in the evening to check messages or contact family. Outside of these times, devices should be kept safely stored, with clear guidelines to prevent distraction, overuse, or exclusion within the group.

This balance helps teens stay connected without losing focus on the outdoor experience and group interaction. Leaders should model the same digital boundaries to set a positive example. Encouraging digital mindfulness allows campers to fully immerse themselves in the activities, develop stronger social bonds, and appreciate the natural environment without constant digital interruptions.

Communication with parents

Clear and regular communication with parents is essential for building trust and ensuring peace of mind during the camp. Before the camp begins, provide detailed

information about the schedule, location, contact numbers, and emergency procedures. During the camp, send brief updates once a day—such as a group message or photo—to reassure families that all is well.

Let parents know when their children will have their designated phone time, and encourage them to contact staff directly in case of urgent matters.

Transparent, timely communication helps parents feel connected and confident in the camp's organisation.

Respect the plan you have set up at the beginning and have a backup plan

It's important to follow the plan you've carefully set up at the start to ensure the camp runs smoothly and everyone knows what to expect. However, be prepared with a backup plan to handle any unexpected changes—such as bad weather

or delays—so you can adapt quickly without disrupting the experience. Flexibility alongside good preparation helps keep the camp safe and enjoyable for all.



How to keep the campsite clean and clean everything all the time to leave no trace



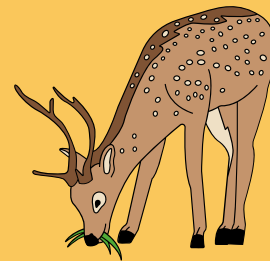
Encourage everyone to **dispose of all rubbish properly** using designated bins or take it home if no facilities are available.



Use **biodegradable** soap and cleaning products for washing dishes and personal hygiene.



Set up a **waste sorting station** for recycling, compost, and landfill to teach responsible disposal.



Clean up food scraps and spills immediately to avoid attracting wildlife.



Regularly **collect litter around the campsite** throughout the day, not just at the end.



Use **reusable** containers, utensils, and water bottles to reduce single-use waste.



Avoid **damaging** plants or trees when setting up tents or walking around.



Ensure **campfire ashes** are completely cooled and buried or disposed of safely.



Before leaving, **conduct a final site sweep** to pick up any remaining trash or belongings.



Educate campers on the “**Leave No Trace**” principles and the importance of protecting the environment.

How to motivate teens?

To keep teens motivated throughout the camp, it's important to create a fun, supportive, and inclusive environment where their voices are heard and their efforts recognised. Incorporate a variety of engaging activities that balance challenge with enjoyment, allowing them to try new things and build confidence. Use positive reinforcement, celebrate small achievements, and encourage teamwork through group goals and friendly competitions.

Giving teens some choice and responsibility in activities also boosts their sense of ownership and enthusiasm. Finally, make time for socialising, creativity, and reflection so they feel connected and valued beyond just the physical tasks.

Games and activities for the camps

Camping with youngsters can be amazing if you have the right mix of fun, adventure, and imagination! Here are some games and activities that work really well in the woods, grouped by type:

Orientation challenge

The Orientation Challenge turns a simple walk in the woods into an exciting adventure. Campers work in teams to navigate using maps and clues, finding hidden checkpoints scattered around the forest.

Choose several landmarks, mark them with ribbons or flags, and give each team a simple map. At every checkpoint, they complete small tasks or puzzles that lead them to the next location. The final stop reveals a small treasure or reward.

This activity can be adapted for any age: younger children follow easy clues and short routes, while older campers can use compasses and timed challenges. Whether played by day or glowing with lights at night, it builds teamwork, curiosity, and confidence — and fills the woods with the spirit of discovery.



Treasure hunt

Participants follow a series of riddles, clues, or markers hidden around the camp area or hiking trail. Each clue leads to the next until the final treasure is discovered. This can be themed (e.g. pirates, forest secrets) to increase excitement and immersion. A treasure map could be made for them to follow.



Building with and from nature

Campers work in small groups to construct something using only materials found in nature, such as sticks, stones, leaves, and mud. Tasks could be creating miniature huts, art pieces, or even survival shelters. This helps participants with team-building and problem-solving skills.

Sporty games

These can include classic outdoor games like Capture the Flag, relay races, dodgeball, or invented team games. Rules can be adapted based on space, group size, and energy levels. Try and use natural resources instead of carrying additional equipment on the hike to the camp.



Human Bingo

Human Bingo is an interactive icebreaker activity designed to help people get to know each other. Each participant receives a bingo-style grid filled with different personal traits, experiences, or fun facts. The goal is to walk around and find other participants who match the descriptions, writing their names in the appropriate squares. The first person to complete a row, column, or full card yells "Bingo!" and typically wins a small prize. It's a fun, social game that encourages conversation and connection.

Dare2Move4Nature human bingo sheet

<i>Has a birthday in August</i>	<i>Speaks more than 2 languages</i>	<i>Has travelled to another continent</i>	<i>Plays a musical instrument</i>	<i>Loves spicy food</i>
<i>Has a pet dog</i>	<i>Is the youngest sibling</i>	<i>Can cook a signature dish</i>	<i>Wears glasses</i>	<i>Has met a celebrity</i>
<i>Has run a marathon</i>	<i>Is left-handed</i>	<i>Knows how to dance salsa</i>	<i>Has a dream job</i>	<i>Is afraid of heights</i>
<i>Is a vegetarian</i>	<i>Loves horror movies</i>	<i>Has gone skydiving</i>	<i>Is an only child</i>	<i>Plays video games</i>
<i>Has read more than 10 books this year</i>	<i>Knows how to swim</i>	<i>Has been to more than 5 countries</i>	<i>Loves coffee</i>	<i>Has a twin sibling</i>

Conclusion

Dare2Move4Nature initiative was created to inspire young people to respect and protect the environment while being active in nature. Through camping experience, young participants will learn the essential environmental, outdoor and sustainability skills. By blending those camping and outdoor adventures with meaningful activities, young participants will gain valuable survival skills, develop an understanding of how to protect nature, and enjoy the inclusive, intergenerational connections that come from shared experiences in the wild.

Learn more about the project on the following link:
www.engsoyouth.eu/dare2move4nature



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